

# Stirling/Millington

## Public Meeting Report Back

**Prepared by**  
Topology and  
The Morris County  
Economic  
Development  
Corporation  
(MCEDC)  
**For**  
Long Hill Township

**October 24, 2017**



# Agenda

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Key Takeaways**
- 3 Stirling Public Meeting**
- 4 Millington Public Meeting**
- 5 Next Steps + Moving Forward**

# THE FUTURE OF STIRLING

MAIN AVE AND TRAIN STATION

PUBLIC MEETING

Do you want to help shape the future of Stirling? Tell us what you love about Main Ave and what opportunities exist to make it even better. We want to hear from residents about what their vision for Stirling looks like. What kinds of businesses and amenities do you want in Stirling and what do you want to see more of?

Facilitated by:



MORRIS COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



*Township of Long Hill*

**WHEN:** Thursday, Sep 28th  
7:30PM-9:30PM

**WHERE:** Long Hill Senior Center  
769 Valley Rd

# THE FUTURE OF MILLINGTON

PUBLIC MEETING

Do you want to help shape the future of Millington? Tell us about how you would like to see the character and public realm evolve into the future. We want to know what residents think the visual character of Millington should be. What businesses do you want to see in Millington? How can public space improve? What do you love about Millington and would you like to see more of?

Facilitated by:



MORRIS COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



*Township of Long Hill*

**WHEN:** Thursday, Oct 5th  
7:30PM - 9:30PM

**WHERE:** Long Hill Senior Center  
769 Valley Rd

# 1. Introduction

## Goals of public meetings

- To get broad feedback on how Stirling + Millington should look like
- What people love about Millington + Stirling
- What challenges need to be addressed
- What people care about most
- Review of current mater Plan Goals + Village Zones

## 2. Key Takeaways

- Many residents felt that they didn't have an understanding of the planning process in Long Hill. What does the Planning Board + Township Committee do?
- Need to communicate the Township's affordable housing obligations, and why the Town needs to face these challenges proactively.
- Need for more communication and community engagement. Residents felt that pre-determined outcomes were not conducive to transparent engagement.

# 3. Stirling Feedback

- Focus on Main Avenue + Train Station
- 157 Survey responses
- Over 300 post it notes/comments

## Why do people come to Stirling?

- They live there: **30% of respondents**
- They go to eat/shop there: **50% of respondents**

## How do they get there?

- Walk: **16%**
- Drive: **78%**

## In the past 10 years, Main Avenue has:

- Has become more of a place I want to visit: **30%**
- Become less of place I want to visit: **25%**
- Has Remained the same: **36%**
- No Opinion: **9%**

### 3. Stirling Feedback

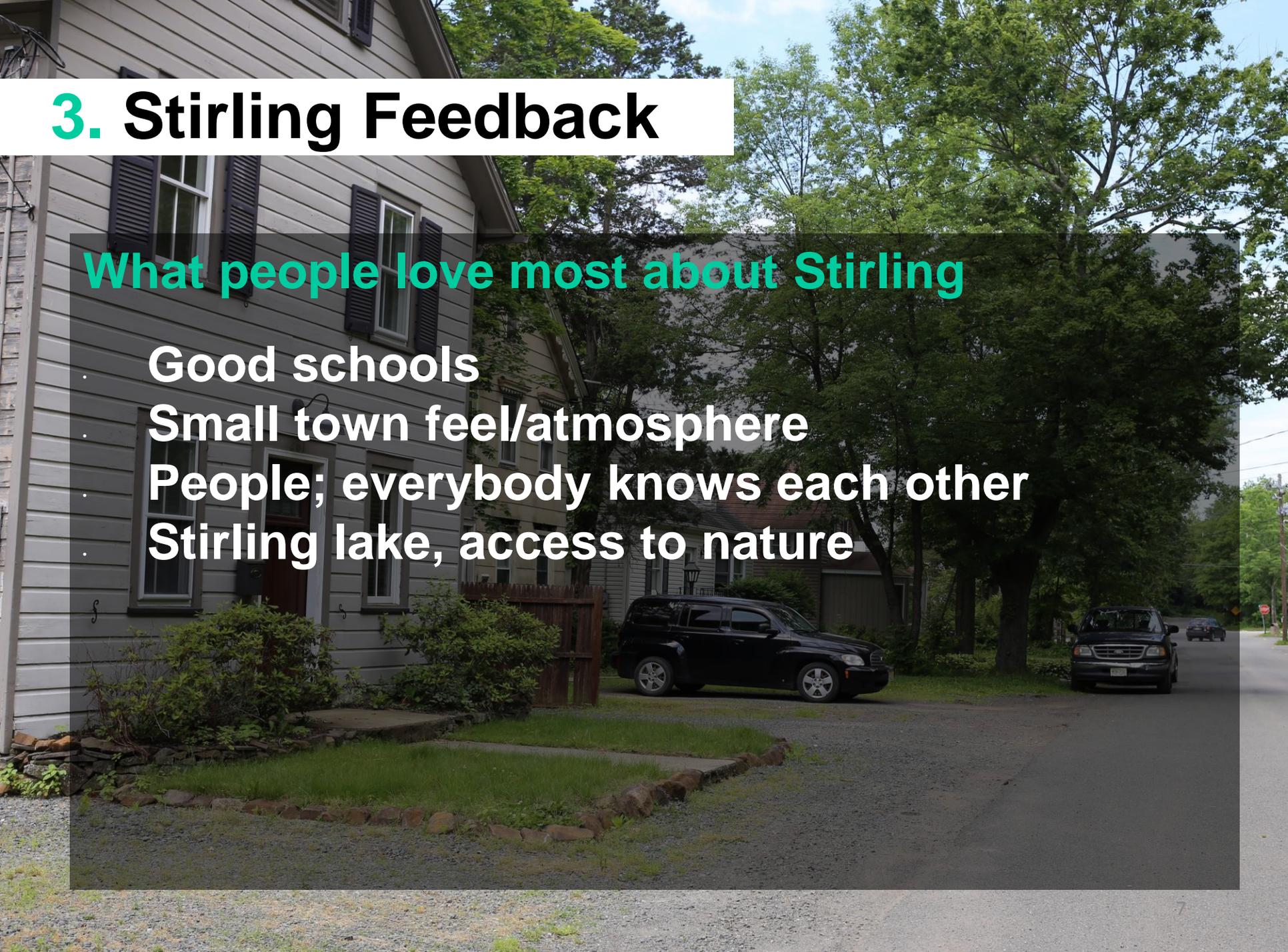
What people love most about Stirling

- Good schools

- Small town feel/atmosphere

- People; everybody knows each other

- Stirling lake, access to nature



# 3. Stirling Feedback

## Key concerns/challenges in Stirling

- Vacant stores
- Few local options for dining/coffee/community
- Deteriorating historic properties
- Taxes
- Declining train service
- Overdevelopment (losing charm, mc-mansions, modern architecture)
- Strain on school system
- Lack of infrastructure to support growth

### 3. Stirling Feedback

**Aesthetics/improvements: least/most desirable priorities**

**Most important:**

Strong signage design regulation (Basking Ridge)

Streetlights

Plantings

Improved sidewalks/seating

Increased public parking

**Least Important:**

Decorative paving

Additional trash cans/recycling bins

Bike racks

# 3. Stirling Feedback

## Visual Preference

**Do you think Stirling needs redevelopment?**

- **Yes: 82%**
- **No: 14%**
- **No Opinion: 4%**

**The Township should encourage redevelopment with a mix of retail, residential and offices in Stirling in order to increase the tax base and create a more traditional “downtown” environment:**

- **Strongly agree: 52%**
- **Agree: 23%**
- **Neutral: 11%**
- **Disagree: 6%**
- **Strongly Disagree: 8%**

## 3. Stirling Feedback

### What is not Stirling Character

“My husband and I have only been in Long Hill for two years and have a young son. We hope to make the township our long-term home, and a more developed Stirling would highly encourage us to do that.

Our biggest concern is wanting to make sure that the small-town charm and quaint feel of Stirling remains the same and that the town does not become too city-like”

# 3. Stirling Feedback

## What is not Stirling Character

Residents disliked wide streets and rows of adjacent development



# 3. Stirling Feedback

## What is not Stirling Character

Residents disliked wide streets and rows of adjacent development



# 3. Stirling Feedback

## What is not Stirling Character

Residents disliked wide streets and rows of adjacent development



## 3. Stirling Feedback

### What is not Stirling Character

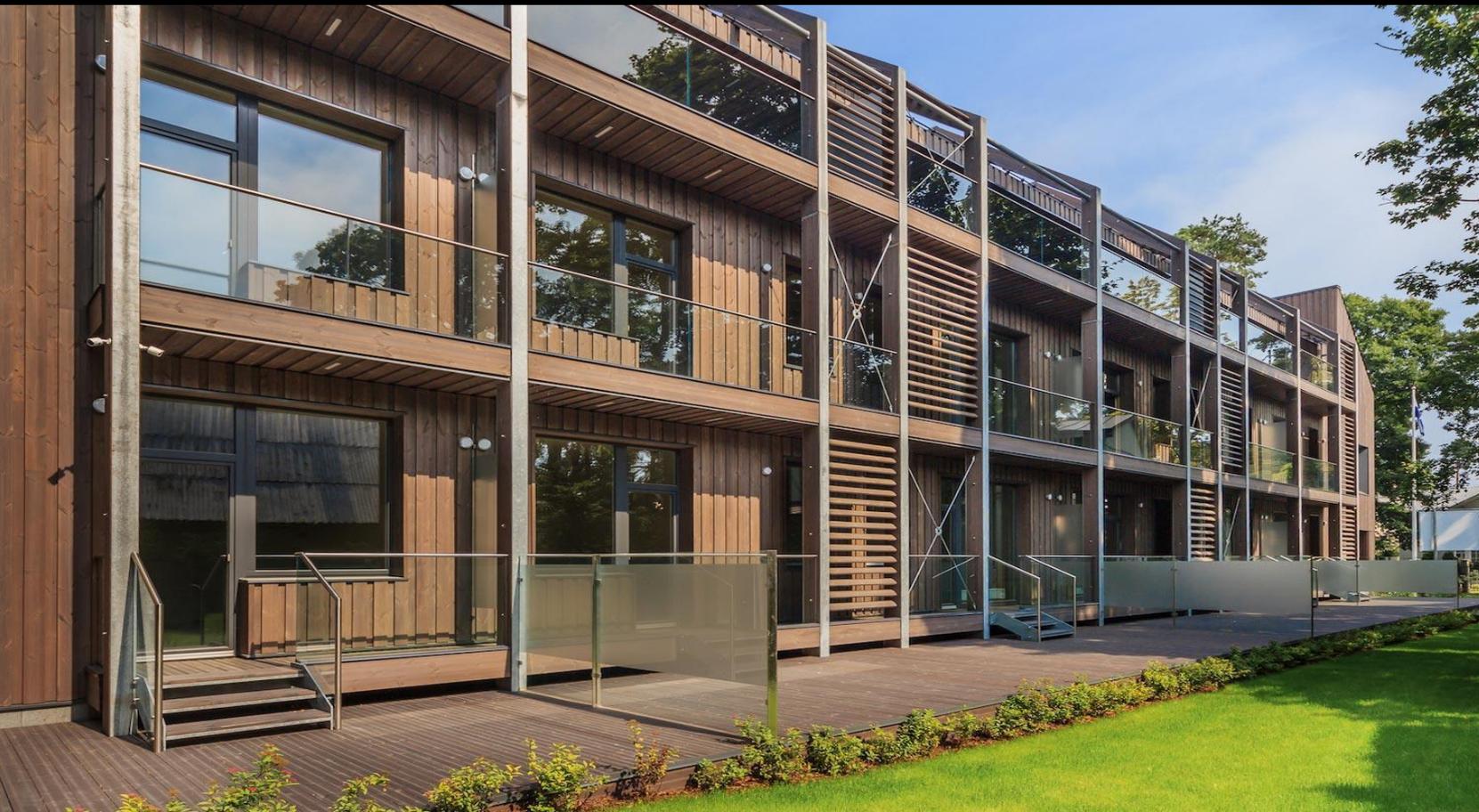
Residents disliked non-traditional/modern architecture and building materials



## 3. Stirling Feedback

### What is not Stirling Character

Residents disliked non-traditional/modern architecture and building materials



# 3. Stirling Feedback

## What is not Stirling Character

Residents disliked dense housing, even at a low scale



## 3. Stirling Feedback

### What is Stirling Character?

- . Stressed small-town and semi-rural character
- . Connection to nature, recreation, the Great Swamp
- . Need to preserve existing historic properties so they are not lost
- . Stirling is “laid back”, “calm”
- . Feels safe (except for speeding)

# 3. Stirling Feedback

## What is not Stirling Character

Residents liked stand alone buildings in small-town/village setting



# 3. Stirling Feedback

## What is not Stirling Character

Residents liked community + public space



# 3. Stirling Feedback

## What is not Stirling Character

Wide sidewalks + connection to nature



# 3. Stirling Feedback

## Summary

- . More options for dining/entertainment
- . Focus on small/local business (make opening a business easier in Stirling)
- . Focus on rehabilitation of historic properties
- . Public parking a concern
- . Don't want Stirling to feel like a city but a small town

## 4. Millington Feedback

- Focus on TIFA site + Train Station
- 122 Survey responses
- Over 500 post it notes/comments

### Why do people come to Millington?

- They live there: **62% of respondents**
- They go to eat/shop there: **9% of respondents**

### In the past 10 years, the area around the train station in Millington has:

- Has become more of a place I want to visit: **7%**
- Become less of place I want to visit: **22%**
- Has Remained the same: **61%**
- No Opinion: **11%**

# 4. Millington Feedback

What people love most about Millington

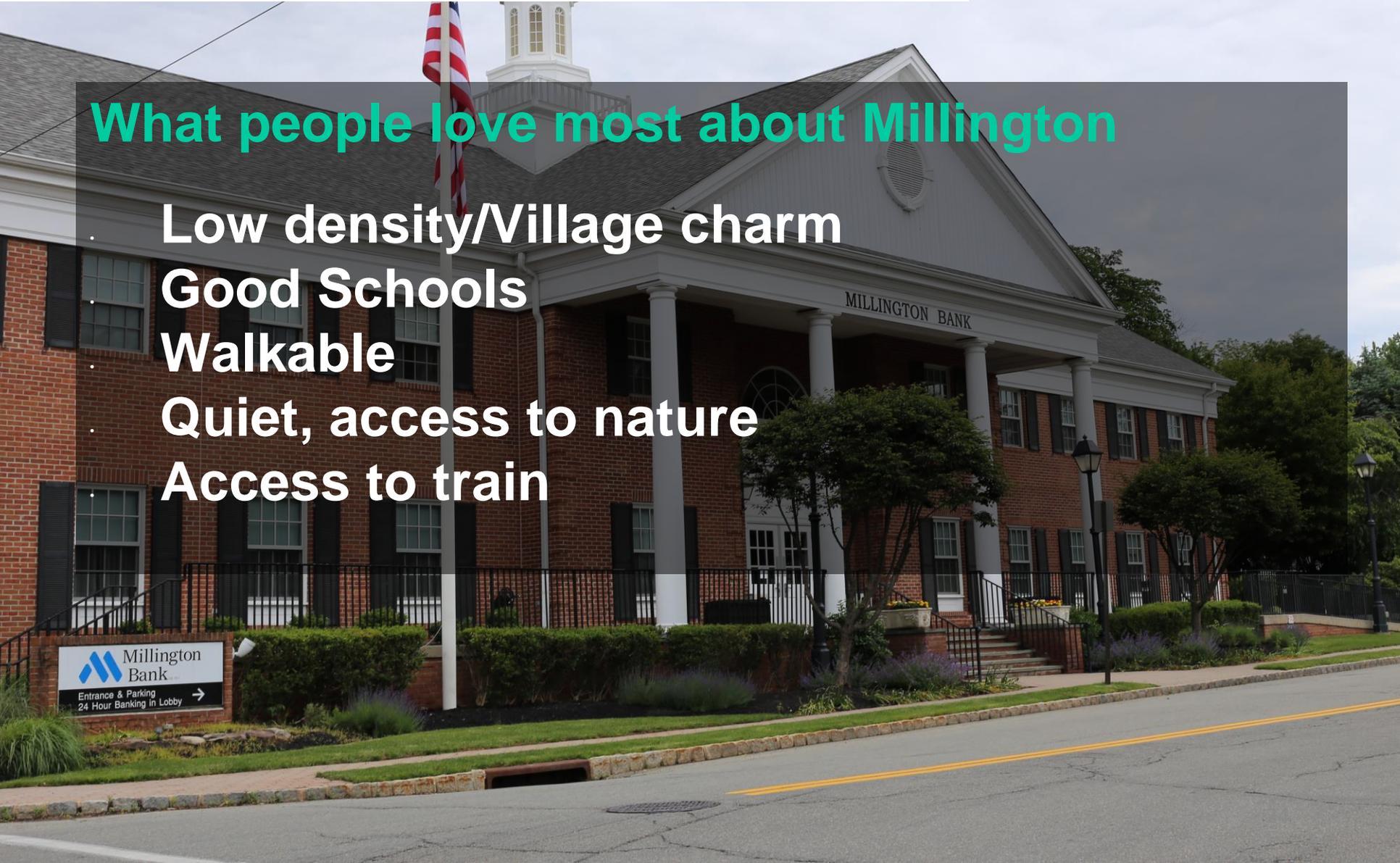
Low density/Village charm

Good Schools

Walkable

Quiet, access to nature

Access to train



# 4. Millington Feedback

## Key concerns/challenges in Millington

- Increasing traffic

- Contamination on TIFA site

- Blighted buildings/properties

- More community involvement in decision making

- Taxes

- What will affordable housing look like?

- No place for community to gather, not a true “village” center

- Safe walking routes to school

# 4. Millington Feedback

**Aesthetics/improvements: least/most desirable priorities**

**Most important:**

- Plantings
- Streetlights
- Improved sidewalks/seating

**Least Important:**

- Additional trash cans/recycling bins
- Increased public parking
- Bike racks



## 4. Millington Feedback

### Summary

- Improve deteriorated properties (TIFA)
- Concerns about asbestos on TIFA site
- Maintain small community feel
- Make Millington a true village center for the community, a place to meet and enjoy
- Concern about adding more retail that will not be filled
- Connecting Millington to other Village Centers (Stirling + Gillette)

## 5. Next Steps + Moving Forward

### Future public meetings:

- Lay the groundwork for how the Township operates. Explain what the Planning Board + Township Committee is in control of what what is beyond their control.
- Communicate clearly and early on in the planning process to reach consensus on shared vision.
- Address key concerns directly and provide follow up (e.g., many residents have concerns about asbestos contamination in Millington – explain regulations (NJDEP) that ensure the Town is in control)
- Aesthetic + redevelopment on Valley Road still a key concern

**Questions?**